



FIRST DAY INFORMATION PACKET

www.rcps.us

This document contains various notifications of daily and annual school procedures regarding multiple categories. Please read carefully and completely.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Policy 7.07

Daily student attendance is a key factor in student success in school. Being present each day contributes to a student's feeling connected to the school and to the student's learning. Roanoke County Public Schools (RCPS) takes seriously our obligation to provide high quality, engaging, and purposeful learning experiences designed to meet students' needs and to prepare them for future opportunities. Our goal is to create and sustain schools and classrooms to which students are eager to go and learn. RCPS welcomes you as a valued partner in supporting acceptable levels of school attendance for our students. We want to keep you informed of student attendance procedures that RCPS schools follow in order to support this cooperative effort.

RCPS schools will follow the procedures below for student attendance. The full version is located in Policy 7.07 and Administrative Regulation 7.07AR under School Board Policies on the RCPS website: www.rcps.us.

Thank you for your support of our joint efforts to promote student learning through good student attendance. If you have any questions, please contact your school's principal, school counselor, or school social worker. You may also contact Lori Wimbush, Director of Equity and Engagement, at 562-3900 ext. 10195.

Excused Absences and Tardies

Parents of students who are absent or tardy must inform the school **in writing** of the reason for the absence or tardy no later than upon the student's return to school (emailed message is acceptable). School staff records the student's absence or tardy for each day as "excused" or "unexcused". **Please be aware that, if absences, tardies, and early releases that are excused solely by parent explanation become excessive, the school will require additional documentation in order to ensure compliance with the compulsory school attendance law.**

Acceptable Excuses

1. Absences and tardies are excused for the following reasons with **written explanation** from the parent:
 - a. illness of the student
 - b. approval from administration prior to the absence
 - c. death in family/funeral
 - d. school-sponsored activities
 - e. suspension from school
 - f. legal obligations
 - g. observance of a nationally recognized religious holiday if such holiday is verified and the school is notified in advance.
 - h. for middle and high school students, one school day per school year to engage in a civic event.
2. Absences and tardies are excused for the following reasons with appropriate **written documentation**:
 - a. hospitalization or extended illness (with documentation from physician)
 - b. doctor or dental appointment (with documentation from physician's or dentist's office)
 - c. mandatory court appearance (with court documentation)
3. Appropriate interventions will be followed, as outlined below, when a student engages in a pattern of absences for less than a full day, the explanation of which, if it were a full-day absence, would not be an excused absence.
4. A student whose absence is excused due to the observance of a nationally recognized religious holiday is not deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, which the student missed by reason of such absence.
5. Students shall attend school for a full day unless excused by the principal or principal's designee.
6. Absences and tardies that do not meet the criteria for being excused absences or tardies are considered unexcused absences or tardies. Students in grades 9-12 may be denied full credit for assignments missed due to an unexcused absence or tardy.
7. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer or the division superintendent to seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law.

Excessive Absences or Tardies Without Adequate Written Documentation

If absences or tardies excused solely based on parent explanation become excessive, the school will require additional documentation in order to ensure compliance with the compulsory student attendance law. Such additional documentation may include written documentation from a physician treating the student for a chronic or extended illness or court documentation resulting from student involvement in a legal matter.

School principals and school counselors regularly collaborate with school social workers to monitor student attendance and communicate with students, parents, and families regarding excessive absences unsupported by adequate documentation.

For the purposes of avoiding excessive tardiness to school that results in frequent loss of instructional time, **five (5) tardies to school without adequate written documentation will be considered the equivalent of one (1) absence**

For the purpose of avoiding excessive early releases from school that results in frequent loss of instructional time, **five (5) early releases from school without adequate written documentation will be considered the equivalent of one (1) absence.**

The following procedures are followed when a student has been absent excessively without adequate written documentation:

First Notification Letter

1. Within the first semester, if a student accumulates five absences excused solely based on parent explanation, the school will notify the parent of the student (First Notification Letter) and list the dates the student has been absent.
2. During the second semester, if a student accumulated fewer than five (5) absences excused solely based on parent explanation within the first semester, but the student subsequently accumulates ten (10) such absences during the second semester, the school will notify the parent of the student (First Notification Letter) and list the dates the student has been absent.

Second Notification Letter

1. Within the first semester, after the First Notification Letter has been sent to a parent as required in section (a)(i), the school will send a Second Notification Letter to the parent if the student accumulates ten (10) absences without adequate documentation. The Second Notification Letter will list the dates the student has been absent and the parent will be advised that the matter may be referred to the juvenile and domestic relations court.
2. During the second semester, after the First Notification Letter has been sent to a parent as required in section (a)(ii), the school will send a Second Notification Letter to the parent if the student accumulates an eleventh (11th) absence without adequate documentation. The Second Notification Letter will list the dates the student has been absent and the parent will be advised that the matter may be referred to the juvenile and domestic relations Court.

Student Support Meeting

1. Within the first semester, after the First Notification Letter has been sent to a parent as required in section (a)(i), the school will send a Second Notification Letter to the parent if the student accumulates ten (10) absences without adequate documentation. The Second Notification Letter will list the dates the student has been absent and the parent will be advised that the matter may be referred to the juvenile and domestic relations court.
2. During the second semester, after the First Notification Letter has been sent to a parent as required in section (a)(ii), the school will send a Second Notification Letter to the parent if the student accumulates an eleventh (11th) absence without adequate documentation. The Second Notification Letter will list the dates the student has been absent and the parent will be advised that the matter may be referred to the juvenile and domestic relations Court.
3. If the parent has been adequately notified of the Student Support Meeting but fails to attend the meeting, the superintendent's designee will be notified and will send a letter offering the parents an opportunity to reschedule the meeting. The parent must respond requesting to reschedule the meeting within seven business days from the date of the letter. If the parent fails to attend the Student Support Meeting and did not request to reschedule, the school social worker will file a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations court.

Complaint Filed with Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court

After conferencing with the parent, if a student accumulates three (3) additional absences without adequate documentation, the school social worker will file a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations court.

FINAL ASSESSMENTS AND EXEMPTIONS FOR FULL-YEAR CREDIT BEARING COURSES

Policy 6.16

Roanoke County Public Schools modified policy 6.16 in 2018-19. Policy 6.16 permits students to be exempt from end of the year final assessments provided students meet all of the following requirements:

- Must be a student enrolled in any full-year credit bearing class, with the exception of classes taken for dual enrollment credit. Students taking courses for dual enrollment credit must take all exams in conformance to the policies of the college and, therefore, are not eligible for exemption from final assessments.

AND

- Must have an A or B average in course for the second semester at the time exemptions are declared.

AND

- Students may not miss more than five days of school for the second semester for courses on the A/B day and seven days of school for the second semester for courses that meet daily (e.g. the Algebra 1 and Geometry courses at the middle school level). Exceptions include school-sponsored activities and nationally recognized religious holidays. Students must attend at least 50% of a class period in order to be counted present in a class for the purpose of exemption from final assessments. Parents can appeal absences to the Director of Secondary Instruction.

AND

- If enrolled in a subject with an End-of-Course SOL test or industry certification, the student must have passed the corresponding SOL test or industry certification. English 10 and 11 students must have passed both the writing and RLR SOL tests, respectively.

AND

- Students may not be absent more than 13 full days during the entire school year (includes A and B days combined and not counting days absent for exam exemptions). Students must miss 100% of the school day to be considered as absent for a full day.

SCHOOL NUTRITION

The school nutrition program strives to offer nutritious, well balanced school meals that meet the needs of the various age groups in our student community. We offer breakfast and lunch programs at all Roanoke County schools daily.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) oversees the operation by the issuance of regulations and guidelines that are required to be followed by the program operation.

Refer to the department website for more information concerning updates as they become available. Visit www.rcps.us and click on Departments, School Nutrition.

UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

Policy 9.14

Roanoke County Schools recognizes that the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are integral in ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals to support their academic success. It is also imperative to protect the financial stability of the school nutrition program.

The intent of this administrative regulation is to establish a process and procedure to handle situations when children eligible for reduced-price or full-price meal benefits have insufficient funds to pay for school meals; as well as for the collection of unpaid meal charges and delinquent account debt. All reasonable efforts will be used to avoid calling attention to a student's inability to pay.

- No students will be denied a reimbursable meal even if they have accrued a negative balance on their cafeteria account.
- Students will not be allowed to charge additional items (ala carte) to their account. Items such as snacks, ice cream, milk, juice, extra entree or side items are considered ala carte.

SCHOOL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Roanoke County Public Schools has partnered with K&K Insurance Group to offer parents an optional student insurance package for the 2022-2023 school year. Parents may access K&K Insurance at this link: www.StudentInsurance-kk.com to view additional information and sign up for coverage.

Coverage provided by this company is not medical insurance and does not cover sickness or wellness medical visits. Benefits amounts are payable only in the event of accidental injury to any covered student based on coverage tier selected.

PARENTLINK

Keeping parents informed and involved helps to assure student safety and improve student success. As it has become more challenging for schools to reach families quickly and effectively, our school district uses a system called ParentLink which is a product from Blackboard.

ParentLink is an essential tool for notification and communication. Within minutes of an emergency, school officials can use ParentLink to deliver a single, clear message to the students' parents or guardians by telephone, cell phone or e-mail in any combination. ParentLink can also be used to notify you of a school closing due to inclement weather.

We will automatically send an alert to the home telephone number of students as listed in our Student Information System. In addition, ParentLink is Internet based, allowing each family to maintain a secure, password protected online profile. Using this profile, you may designate additional communication methods, such as additional telephone numbers, cell phones or email to also receive alerts. ParentLink also offers apps for both Apple and Android devices to receive alerts sent by the school district. You can log into your profile at any time to update your contact information. Maintaining the accuracy of your profile will increase the ability of the school to keep you informed. The school does not maintain your delivery options or additional contacts you may have added in this system.

Your online profile will enable you to:

- Input your personal contact information
- Select which type of school information you would like to receive on each of your contact devices
- Add contact information of other caretakers of your children, such as a grandparent or neighbor

The system can be accessed at <https://rcs.parentlink.net>. We encourage all of you to take advantage of this opportunity, as we will be utilizing this system for emergency school-to-home communication and some schools may use it for more routine messaging. Remember, alerts will automatically be sent to your home telephone number, even if you do not register for an account.

If you need assistance with your profile, please contact your student's school. If you do not have access to a computer, please feel free to come to the school to use our facilities.

Contact your child's school for an activation letter if you don't currently have a ParentLink account.

Parents with existing accounts will continue to use the same logon information from last year.

Alerts will automatically be sent to your home telephone number, even if you do not register for an account.

AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

A current copy of the School Board policy manual and administrative regulations is available on the RCPS website under “School Board”. Printed copies are available to citizens who do not have online access by contacting the Clerk of the Board at 5937 Cove Rd. Roanoke, VA 24019.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for all Virginia Board of Education-approved diplomas are located in the Course Registration Guide on the RCPS website under “Parents & Students”.

PROMOTION, RETENTION AND REMEDIATION POLICIES

School Board policies regarding promotion, retention, and remediation are available on the RCPS website under “School Board”. Related policies include 6.18, 6.32, and 6.33.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING

Information regarding the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) applicable to each grade level is located on the RCPS website under “Departments” and then “Instruction”. Information regarding SOL assessments is located on the RCPS website under “Departments” and then “Student Assessment and Remediation”.

TRANSPORTATION

Pre K, kindergarten and first grade students must have a parent, adult who is listed on the student’s emergency card, or an individual who is at least 14 years of age at the bus stop (visible to the bus driver) in the afternoon to receive them. The parent must provide written permission, which is pre-approved by the school administration, for individuals not listed on the emergency card and for any minor (age 14 to 17) in the afternoon to receive them. If a parent, other adults listed on the student’s emergency card, or the pre-approved adult or minor is not at the bus stop, the child will be kept on the bus and returned to the elementary school.